

PM SCOFFS AT DR. DANIEL'S ASSERTIONS

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Prime Minister Gaston Browne brought smiles and commendations from attendees at the National Soup Kitchen by taking part in sharing out lunches to those who depend on the organisation for a hot meal daily. *Story on page 5.*

PM scoffs at Dr. Daniel's assertions

In the wake of the UPP's boycott of the National Budget debate in the House of Representatives this week, various spokespersons for the party have been making public pronouncements in what appears to be an attempt to make up for the lost opportunity to participate in the debate.

One such person is Dr. George Daniel, said to be one of the key advisors to the party's leadership.

He can be heard stating that St. Kitts Nevis spends twice as much as a percentage of its GDP on a capita basis than does Antigua and Barbuda.

It is not clear whether

his assertion was supported by data, however, in a quick response, Prime Minister Gaston Browne, said the UPP and its spokespersons are making the case for the ABLP government in that it has been frugal in spending the people's money.

"I think between himself and D. Gisele Isaac, I want to send them one of our 40-foot containers of hams and turkeys each because they have made the case for the ABLP; we could not have said it any better.

He made the point that St. Kitts-Nevis spends twice the amount than Antigua and Barbuda on a per capita basis which means



Prime Minister Gaston Browne that the counter claim that there has been profligacy by my administration is unfounded.

He was trying to make the case that we mis-managed public finances while quoting statistics from St. Kitts in which it has been shown with empirical evidence that they spend more than we do on a per capita basis," he remarked.

PM Browne, who also holds the finance ministry portfolio, said the government has been quite frugal in how it spends the people's money.

"One of the reasons why we have to be frugal is that we collect the least tax of any country in the Eastern Caribbean and beyond.

"What we have done is to empower the people of Antigua and Barbuda with strong disposable incomes

so they can spend and invest more.

"That policy works well for the ABLP to the extent that we continue to outperform other countries within the Caribbean.

"We have enjoyed stronger rates of growth and admittedly, government's finances have been difficult and we have not been able to meet or obligations because of this low taxation. as we have the lowest rates in the Caribbean," PM Browne explained.

PM Browne stated that the adjustments being made to the ABST rate is to allow government to be able to meet some of its obligations and the minor increase on the rate of taxation to GDP is not considered to be onerous for the people.

AUCTION NOTICE

<u>REGISTRATION SECTION</u>	<u>BLOCK</u>	<u>PARCEL</u>
SOUTH CENTRAL	15 1987B	227

Instructed by ACB MORTGAGE AND TRUST COMPANY LIMITED, I shall sell by PUBLIC AUCTION on Tuesday the 16th day of January 2024 at 11:00am the above residential property at Buckley's Heights.

The property is under the ownership of LOREAN DENISE ROBERTS (aka DENISE LOREAN ROBERTS). The land is a 10,890 sq. ft. (0.25 acre) plot with an approximate 3,841 sq. ft., 2-storey with a partial basement reinforced concrete building with 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms.

The property is in a quiet residential area with a commanding view of the surrounding area.

The Auction shall be held on site.

Details of the Auction may be obtained from Mr. Trevor Santos, Public Auctioneer at telephone numbers: 464-7653 and 562-7653.

Dated this the 15th day of December 2023

Trevor Santos
Licensed Auctioneer

Senate meets today for 2024 Budget debate

The debate on the National Budget 2024 for Antigua and Barbuda moves to the upper house of parliament, the Senate, today.

Leader of Government Business in the Senate, Samantha Marshall will lead off the debate on the \$1.9 billion budget presented by Prime Minister and Finance Minister Gaston Browne to the House of Representatives last Friday.

The budget is projecting continued robust economic performance for Antigua and Barbuda over the next twelve months as international and regional institutions have forecast growth north of 8 percent for 2024.

The budget also indicated that the tourism sector will continue to perform well both from the standpoint of increased visitors as well as new capacity being added to the room stock.

This will give an additional boost to the construction sector with the start of several major hotels developments next year.

Additionally, the budget has shown that Antigua and Barbuda is regaining the job losses it suffered during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21.

Records from the Social Security Scheme indicated that approximately five thousand jobs were lost when

many hotels closed and several private sector businesses closed, some permanently, due to the pandemic.

The latest figures now indicate that three thousand of those jobs have been regained since the end of the pandemic.

Prior to the pandemic, contributors to the scheme stood at 45thousand...in 2020 (the start of the pandemic) it fell to 40-thousand. At the end of September this year it was at 43-thousand.

However, all eyes will be on the opposition benches to see if members on the opposite side will take the position of those in the lower house by boycotting the debate.

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Local News



NOTICE

To: The Commissioner of Police
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. Johns
Antigua.

Dear Sir/Madame,

Re: Application for Tavern Licence

I Bernita Barber of Golden Grove, with registered business situate at Cooks Extension/Hatton in St. Johns. Antigua and Barbuda **DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE** that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, Gray's Farm, St. Johns, Antigua on Thursday 4th January, 2024 next ensuring for a Liquor Licensing Pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (Intoxication Liquor) Act Cap.249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises know as "**Bernita's Market Enterprise**" situated at Cooks Extension/Hatton in the parish of St. Johns, Antigua and Barbuda.

B.Barber
.....

Social Security makes early pension payments

Persons who receive a monthly pension payment from the Social Security Scheme are expected to have a good Christmas holiday season as the scheme has completed all pension payments this week.

This has been confirmed by the Director of the Scheme, David Matthias, who said that pension cheques have been dispatched to the banks and other financial institutions from Monday of this week.

He said all the financial institutions have been paid by the scheme and they are



David Matthias expected have deposited the funds to the accounts of pensioners.

There are more than 10-thousand-four hundred pensioners who receive payments amounting to approximately \$11 million each month.

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Christmas
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Leading by example!

He did not put on the traditional Santa Claus outfit, but Prime Minister Gaston Browne brought smiles and commendations from attendees at the National Soup Kitchen by taking part in sharing out lunches to those who depend on the organisation for a hot meal daily.

In doing so, Prime Minister Browne demonstrated his concerns for the less fortunate in the society by showing that he was indeed 'the servant of the people' in this act of kindness and fellowship during this holiday season.

During the exercise, the prime

minister took time to engage in conversations with the attendees of the Soup Kitchen, several of whom he knew by name. He said this interaction is important as the greatness of a society is measured by how it treats its most vulnerable.

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Caribbean Union Bank

VACANCY

MANAGER – ENTERPRISE RISK & COMPLIANCE

THE ROLE:

Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) is seeking to fill the position of Manager – Enterprise Risk & Compliance. The Risk and Compliance Department safeguards the integrity and stability of the Bank by identifying, assessing, and mitigating potential risks while ensuring strict adherence to regulatory standards. The Manager – Enterprise Risk & Compliance, will lead the development and implementation of the enterprise risk management framework of the Bank and manage its AML/CFT activities to ensure they align with the Bank's strategy.

KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

- › Manage the implementation of the Bank's enterprise-wide Risk Management Framework to facilitate the assessment and ongoing monitoring of industry related risks.
- › Develop and Implement the Bank's Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter Terrorist Financing (CFT) Policies, Procedures and Practices.
- › Create a risk and compliance awareness culture throughout the Bank through ongoing training.
- › Perform strategic risk assessments of new products, mergers, acquisitions or significant investments.
- › Develop and coordinate/facilitate risk management and AML/CFT training and technical assistance for the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of the Bank.
- › Serve as a liaison between the Bank, regulatory bodies, correspondent banks and other stakeholders on risk and compliance matters.
- › Administer the affairs of the enterprise risk and compliance department.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED:

ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- › Minimum of Bachelor's Degree in Economics, Finance or Financial Management, Banking or a similar field;
- › Master's Degree would be an asset;
- › Risk Management Certification
- › CAMS or other compliance relevant certification

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE/COMPETENCIES

- › At least ten years' experience at a senior level in a Bank or other financial services organization, five of which must be in a risk management related position.
- › Critical thinking skills, strategic thinking, effective analysis of data, and the ability to analyze business plans based on component risks;
- › Keen business acumen, business and financial judgment and problem-solving skills;
- › Ability to analyze financial information;
- › A strong understanding of processes and core management activities to assist the Bank in developing processes to identify, monitor, and report on key business risks;
- › Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- › Exemplary interpersonal, relationship building and customer service skills;
- › Capacity to deal confidently and courteously with people at all levels.
- › Strong organisational and prioritizing skills, the ability to successfully complete several tasks concurrently and meet deadlines.
- › Adaptable/flexible
- › Able to work effectively on own or as part of a team
- › High accuracy and attention to detail

APPLICATIONS

Applications can be submitted via email to human.resource@cub.ag or, alternatively, hand-delivered to the receptionist at our Friars Hill branch or to the branch ambassador at our Starling's branch. The deadline for applications is **December 30th 2023**.

Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Local News



cont'd from pg 5

“We have here some of the most vulnerable in the society and Inspector Veldon Raggette and his team have contributed consistent-

ly to this national effort to assist the poor and vulnerable. I am very pleased to be participating in this initiative as any programme designed to assist the poor and

the vulnerable can always count on my support. I am certainly happy to be here on the eve of Christmas to assist serve the poor and vulnerable,” he stated.

The prime minister added that his life is a ‘life of service’; a life of service to all, including those who are considered as the most vulnerable in the society.

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Antigua and Barbuda Wellness Month plans for January 2024

The month of January (2024) has been designated as wellness month by the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority as it kicks off the new year packed with activities for residents and visitors alike.

Antigua and Barbuda Wellness Month offers those seeking to enhance their quality of life a selection of carefully curated activities in resorts and in local communities, ranging from wellness retreats, spa experiences, hiking trail exploration, off-shore island excursions with yoga on secluded beaches, culturally immersive experiences and healthy eating options.

CEO of the Tourism Authority, Colin C. James said: Antigua and Barbuda has a wealth of natural attributes, and skilled wellness service providers. There is plenty to do and uncover in Antigua and Barbuda for

those hoping to enrich their mind, body, and soul, and we can not wait to wow in January!”

For those who love a challenge, the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority has announced two exciting challenges open to competitors of all ages for the month: the adventurous ‘Four corners of Antigua and Barbuda Hiking Challenge’ and the invigorating ‘7 Minute Ice Bath Challenge’.

The Four Corners of Antigua and Barbuda Hiking Challenge, with Wadadli Trailblazers offers outdoor exploration within Antigua and Barbuda’s national parks and lush, rolling hills.

Four hikes with varying degrees of difficulty will take place over the month with hikers trekking to the historic Fort Barrington, picturesque Gaynor’s Bay, and Signal Hill in addition to Barbuda’s unique Darby

Cave.

Meanwhile, the 7 Minute Ice Bath Challenge* organised by organic wellness haven, Wellness Footprints Antigua operated by Antigua and Barbuda 2023 Wellness Champion and Wellness Ambassador Tricia Greenaway will highlight the benefits of an ice bath.

Participants taking the plunge will aim to sit in a bath filled with ice for seven minutes. A therapeutic experience, ice baths are known to have many benefits including helping with focus and meditation, relaxation and better sleep, muscle recovery and improving mental health.

Astronaut, Wellness practitioner and Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Brand Ambassador Keisha Schahaff has also given her stamp of approval to Antigua and Barbuda Well-

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Local News



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ness Month, and will offer twelve persons during the month complimentary access to her wellness retreat themed around discovering the power of space, wellness, and personal growth.

“Remember, we begin with a total reset and cleansing of the system. When the energy in the body is moving, so is everything in your life,” said Schahaff.

Marketing Communications Manager and Wellness Pillar team member at the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority Maria Blackman said, “We are

firm believers that our destination has all the assets for those wishing to lead a well lifestyle, and we are beyond excited to showcase the wellness community in Antigua and Barbuda and meet everyone beginning or continuing their wellness journey in January”.

For visitors and residents interested in starting the new year with a focus on their well-being, here are some of the Antigua and Barbuda Wellness Month offers:

H2O Boat Tours

A boat excursion that offers the perfect escape, combining the therapeutic

rhythm of ocean waves with breathtaking coastal views. Immerse yourself in the tranquillity of yoga on secluded beaches, savouring moments of bliss during snorkelling and our meditation at sunset adventures. Special Offer: 10% off any final tour price if used by the end of Jan 2024.

Humble and Free Wadadli

Uncover the rich cultural tapestry of Antigua through the unique lens of Rastafari with Humble and Free Wadadli guided tours and eco-experiences. Special Offer: 20% off all

of our deluxe experiences during January when you use the code Wellness20 at checkout.

Trek Tours

You need not be an athlete to participate, but you need to be interested in experiencing Antigua’s incredible scenery in an active manner! Special Offer: 10% off all direct bookings using the promo code Wellness24 to be applied only to bookings made via email for the month of January for the scenic Middle Ground Trail.

The Great House Antigua

The Great House Antigua, a historic boutique hotel is the perfect location to explore and relax. Special Offer: - 3 yoga classes per week, - 5% off all spa treatments, - Reiki treatments available and more.

Galley Bay Resort Antigua

Treat yourself at this authentic Caribbean Getaway for Wellness Month with a special rejuvenation package which includes Island Wellness Culinary Delights, Wadadli Breeze Smoothie, Paradise Body Scrub, and Island Fusion Massage and more.

The Treehouse Beach Club Wellness Wednesdays

An experience that nurtures your mind, body, and soul. Enjoy a vegetarian peppercorn and Treehouse cocktail for EC\$35. Stay for yoga at 5:30 p.m. with Wadadlivity.

Job Offer

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At Fly Allways, we move the people who move the world
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Fly Allways, a young and dynamic airline company is looking for Trainee Cabin Attendants for Freelance.

Requirements for the position of TRAINEE CABIN ATTENDANT

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- Length of gentlemen 1.72 – 1.85 meters, Preferred weight 60-75 kg
- Representative overall pleasing and well-groomed appearance with no visible piercings, tattoos, or dental decorations
- Non-smoker with an excellent overall health
- Not afraid of flying! Swimming skills are required
- Fluent communication in English, verbally and in writing. Spanish or Portuguese or another language is an advantage
- Junior college educated with 1 or 2 years of experience in the hospitality branch
- Available to work flexible/extended hours and able to work in a physically demanding role
- Must pass the required psychological test, medical test, alcohol and drugs test
- Willing to be home-based in Antigua or nearby. Accept assignment to any base after training graduation and relocate or commute (i.e. standby travel) to and from the assigned base location

Application

Ready to join the exciting world of Fly Allways? Please send your CV with a photo before **15 January 2024** to the **HR Team flyallwayshrm@gmail.com/ secretary@flyallways.com /+597 8815522**



Merry Christmas

&

A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

FROM THE ACB GRENADA BANK TEAM

ACBONLINE.COM

National publishes self-help book

An Antigua and Barbuda national who now lives in the United States, has published a self-help book geared to those wishing to ‘recharge’ their faith.

The book - *The Black Pineapple* – a fourteen-day boost of delighted faith – was released in June this year by debutant novelist, Alana Baltimore.

“The Black Pineapple is the book for people who intentionally want to reload or recharge their faith before running out of what they have left. In this easy-to-read, guided devotional,

the author takes you on a 14-day journey that encourages you to:

- Be prepared for what has already been prepared for you. Stay in the fight.

- Acknowledge the role you have been assigned to play in your own freedom.

- Receive the grace needed to elevate your faith,” said one of the reviews of the book that is now available on Amazon.

It added that by the end of the book readers will understand why faith is needed to retain one’s de-

light!

Alana Baltimore was born and raised in the small community of Willikies Village in the beautiful Caribbean Island of Antigua and Barbuda. Alana considers her faith and family to be paramount. If she is not cozied up on the couch for movie night, she loves to travel and experience new cities and culture, from Puerto Rico to Kentucky.

Persons wishing to secure a copy of the book may go to Amazon or to contact her brother, Randy Baltimore or other family members.

THE BLACK PINEAPPLE

The Black Pineapple is the book for people who intentionally want to reload or recharge their faith before running out of what they have left. In this easy-to-read, guided devotional, the author takes you on a 14-day journey that encourages you to:


- Be prepared for what has already been prepared for you. Stay in the fight.
- Acknowledge the role you have been assigned to play in your own freedom.
- Receive the grace needed to elevate your faith.

By the end of *The Black Pineapple*, you will understand why faith is needed to retain your delight!


ALANA BALTIMORE


THE BLACK PINEAPPLE

A 14-DAY BOOST OF DELIGHTED FAITH



Alana Baltimore was born and raised in the small community of Willikies Village in the beautiful Caribbean Island of Antigua and Barbuda. Alana considers her faith and family to be paramount. If she is not cozied up on the couch for movie night, she loves to travel and experience new cities and culture, from Puerto Rico to Kentucky. *The Black Pineapple* is Alana’s first book.





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SENATOR CLEMENT ANTONIO FOR ST. GEORGE

SPREADING FESTIVE CHEER AND CLARIFYING INTENTIONS: A MESSAGE FROM SENATOR CLEMENT ANTONIO, PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE FOR ST. GEORGE

December 20, 2023– St. George’s, Antigua and Barbuda - I am pleased to inform you that the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party traditional initiative to distribute ham and turkey throughout the St. George’s constituency has been successfully carried out. This effort was aimed at spreading holiday cheer and supporting the residents of our community during this festive season.

I would like to take this opportunity to address the circulating note that suggests our Party Leader has any ill motives against any Comrade in the St. George community. Such unfounded rumors should be disregarded, as they do not align with the values and intentions of our party. It’s crucial for us to focus on the positive impact of our actions and continue to work together to serve the best interests of our constituents.

If not all, most residents would have received a ham or turkey, courtesy of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party. This generous gesture reflects our commitment to the well-being of our community and demonstrates our dedication to making a positive difference in people’s lives.

Let us rally around the spirit of unity and solidarity as we move forward, and let us not be distracted by divisive or misleading information. Our focus should remain on serving our constituents with integrity and empathy, and ensuring that our efforts are geared towards uplifting the lives of those we represent.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who were involved in our ham and turkey distribution. Your hard work and commitment to serving our community is truly commendable.

As we continue our journey to fulfill the aspirations of the people we serve, let us remain resolute in our dedication to meaningful and impactful actions that reaffirm the values of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party.

Senator Clement Antonio
Prospective Candidate for St. George

268 464 5230 · 268 776 5230

 clement.antonio  clementantonio
 electclementantonio@gmail.com

Technology



Lapsus\$: GTA 6 hacker handed indefinite hospital order

By Joe Tidy

An 18-year-old hacker who leaked clips of a forthcoming Grand Theft Auto (GTA) game has been sentenced to an indefinite hospital order.

Arion Kurtaj from Oxford, who is autistic, was a key member of international gang Lapsus\$.

The gang's attacks on tech giants including Uber, Nvidia and Rockstar Games cost the firms nearly \$10m.

The judge said Kurtaj's skills and desire to commit cyber-crime meant he remained a high risk to the public.

He will remain at a secure hospital for life unless doctors deem him no longer a danger.

The court heard that Kurtaj had been violent while in custody with dozens of reports of injury or property damage.

Doctors deemed Kurtaj unfit to stand trial due to his acute autism so the jury was asked to determine whether or not he committed the alleged acts - not if he did so with criminal intent.

A mental health assessment used as part of the sentencing hearing said he "continued to express the intent to return to cyber-crime as soon as possible. He is highly motivated."

The jury was told that while he was on bail for hacking Nvidia and BT/EE



18-year-old Arion Kurtaj was a key member of the notorious Lapsus\$ cyber-crime gang.

and in police protection at a Travelodge hotel, he continued hacking and carried out his most infamous hack.

Despite having his laptop confiscated, Kurtaj managed to breach Rockstar, the company behind GTA, using an Amazon Firestick, his hotel TV and a mobile phone.

Kurtaj stole 90 clips of the unreleased and hugely anticipated Grand Theft Auto 6.

He broke into the company's internal Slack messaging system to declare "if Rockstar does not contact me on Telegram within 24 hours I will start releasing the source code".

He then posted the clips and source code on a forum under the username TeaPotUberHacker.

He was rearrested and detained until his trial.

Earlier this month, the trailer for GTA 6 was released clocking up 128m views on YouTube in just 4 days.

In sentencing hearings, Kurtaj's defence team argued that the success of the game's trailer indicated that Kurtaj's hack had not caused serious harm to the game developer and asked that this be factored into the sentencing.

But Her Honour Judge Lees said that there were real victims and real harm caused from his other multiple hacks on individuals and the companies he attacked with Lapsus\$.

Rockstar Games alone told the court that the hack cost it \$5m to recover from plus thousands of hours of staff time.

Another Lapsus\$ member, who is 17 and cannot be

named because of his age, was found guilty in the same trial, which lasted six weeks at Southwark Crown Court.

He worked with Kurtaj and other members of Lapsus\$ to hack tech giant Nvidia and phone company BT/EE and steal data before demanding a four million dollar ransom, which was not paid.

They also stole directly from individuals through their cryptocurrency wallets.

The 17-year-old was sentenced to an 18 month long Youth Rehabilitation Order, including intense supervision and a ban on using VPNs online.

As well as hacking offences the boy was sentenced for what the judge described as "unpleasant and frightening pattern of stalking and harassment" of

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Angola leaves Opec oil cartel in output quota row

Angola has announced it is leaving the oil producers' organisation Opec over a dispute on output quotas.

It follows last month's decision by the 13-member cartel and 10 allied nations to further slash oil production in 2024 to prop up volatile global prices.

Angola currently produces about 1.1 million barrels per day, of the 30 million from the whole of Opec.

Oil prices fell on the news, with Brent prices down over \$1 to \$78.5 a barrel by 12:50 GMT, Reuters reports.

Angola's decision to withdraw from Opec came at Thursday's cabinet meeting.

"We feel that at this moment Angola gains nothing by remaining in the organisation and, in defence of its interests, it decided to leave," Mineral Resources and Petroleum Minister Diamantino Azevedo said afterwards.

"If we remained in



Angola is one of Africa's two biggest oil producers.

Opec... Angola would be forced to cut production, and this goes against our policy of avoiding decline and respecting contracts."

The minister added that the decision was not taken lightly.

Angola and Nigeria are the two biggest oil exporters in sub-Saharan Africa.

The AFP news agency reports that both countries have been unhappy at being asked to cut production at a time when they need to increase their foreign currency earnings.

Angola has vast mineral and petroleum reserves, and its economy is among the fastest-growing in the world - but economic growth is highly uneven.

Much of its oil wealth lies in its separate Cabinda province, where a decades-long separatist conflict simmers.

Angola - which had been an Opec member for 16 years - is not the first country to leave the cartel. Ecuador, Indonesia and Qatar have all done the same.

Opec is a grouping of

oil producers which decides how much crude oil to sell on the world market, along with an expanded group called Opec+.

Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, oil prices soared, hitting more than \$120 a barrel in June last year. They fell back to a little above \$70 a barrel in May this year - but have steadily risen since then as producers have tried to restrict output to support the market and after recent attacks on cargo vessels in the Red Sea.

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two young women.

Kurtaj and the 17-year-old are the first members of the Lapsus\$ group to be convicted but it is thought others are still at large.

The gang's audacious attacks in 2021 and 2022 shocked the cyber-security world. The group from the UK, and allegedly Brazil, was described in court as "digital bandits".

The gang - thought to mostly be

teenagers - used con-man like tricks as well as computer hacking to gain access to multinational corporations such as Microsoft, the technology giant and digital banking group Revolut.

During their spree, the hackers regularly celebrated their crimes publicly and taunted victims on the social network app Telegram in English and Portuguese.

It prompted US cyber-authorities to issue a lengthy report into Lapsus\$

and other teen hacker gangs.

It concluded that Lapsus\$ "made clear just how easy it was for its members (juveniles, in some instances) to infiltrate well-defended organisations".

It is not clear how much money Lapsus\$ has made from its cyber-crimes.

No companies publicly admitted paying the hackers and the hackers did not provide the passwords to seized cryptocurrency wallets.

Regional News



Guyanese court issues summons for US-based political activist

By Dillon De Shang

New York-based Guyanese political activist Rickford Burke has been served with a court summons that requires him to appear before an East Coast Demerara magistrate next year.

Burke, who is the President of the Caribbean Guyana Institute for Democracy (CGID) and a critic of the present government, was served with a “defendant summons” by ASP Rodwell Sarabo of the Guyana Police Force (GPF) and US process server Mark Wesserman at his home in Brooklyn, New York on December 16.



Rickford Burke.

In a press statement yesterday, GPF said Burke has to appear in the Vigilance Magistrate’s court on March 28th,

2024.

Burke has been charged with a series of crimes including incitement of hostili-

ty or ill-will on the grounds of race, sedition, inciting public terror and seditious libel.

Two wanted bulletins were issued for Burke on December 3, 2021, and September 29th, 2022. Police filed charges against him on August 28th, 2023.

Meanwhile, Burke has filed a complaint with police in New York.

In a Facebook livestream last evening, he alleged “two men armed with firearms” rushed into his home and attempted to “push a piece of paper” into his face as he was leaving to go to church.

Burke claimed he saw Sarabo and Wesserman digging through his mail.

He said no document was served to him but he found it on the stairs leading to his home.

Burke accused the government and GPF of attempting to abuse the court by filing malicious cases against him.





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Customs agents nab significant number of Caribbean migrants

CMC - The United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency said 1,086 Caribbean migrants had been apprehended between December 1 and December 14, this year.

CBP said that they were detained during exercises involving its Air and Marine Operations (AMO) Southeast Region, US Coast Guard, Homeland Security Task Force-Southeast as well as local and international law enforcement partners.

On December 1, 63 migrants were detained near Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico on a “dangerously overloaded vessel” with two pregnant women among those apprehended.

According to the CBP on December 5, the Miami Air and Marine Branch and Jacksonville Air and Marine Branch Multi-Role Enforcement Aircraft crews located “multiple smuggling vessels near the Turks and Caicos Islands.

“The crews communicated the location to an Operation Bahamas Turks and Caicos (OPBAT) team who coordinated for Turks and Caicos Islands maritime police to conduct the interdiction.



“Partner nation maritime teams apprehended 306 migrants over multiple events in a single day working with Air and Marine Operations aircrews who conducted aerial monitoring,” said the CBP, adding this event accounts for nearly 30 per cent of apprehensions in the first two weeks of December.

In another encounter on December 11, the authorities said they apprehended another 306 migrants.

“This event highlights the cooperation between Air and Marine Operations branches. Aircrews from Jacksonville and Miami continued to work together

throughout the day to keep eyes on suspicious vessels in order to guide maritime units to their location,” said Drew Gellerson, Director of Air and Marine Operations, Jacksonville Air and Marine Branch.

CBP said “another significant enforcement event” occurred on December 11 near Key Largo, Florida.

CBP said 47 Caribbean migrants, who “indicated they had departed Cuba approximately eight days prior and displayed an ‘SOS’ flag when they were discovered by responding authorities,” were also detained on December 11.

“Our crews train relentlessly

to be prepared for situations like this,” said Travis Curtin, Acting Deputy Director of Marine Operations, Miami Air and Marine Branch.

“We will continue to work as a team with our international, federal, state, and local partners to stop illicit maritime traffic.”

Last year, CBP said enforcement actions resulted in 967 arrests and 134,981 apprehensions of undocumented migrants, as well as the seizure or disruption of 250,616 pounds of cocaine, 1,475 pounds of fentanyl, 25,625 pounds of methamphetamine, 1,342 weapons, and US\$21.7 million.

Prague shooting: Gunman dead after killing 14 at Charles University

A gunman has shot dead 14 people and injured another 25 at a university in Prague, officials say, in the deadliest attack in modern Czech history.

Police say the 24-year-old gunman was also “eliminated” following the shooting at Charles University in the historic centre of the capital.

University staff were told to barricade themselves in rooms during the attack.

Prime Minister Petr Fiala said he had cancelled upcoming engagements in light of the “tragic events” on Thursday.

The shooting started at about 15:00 local time (14:00 GMT) at the university’s Faculty of Arts building on Jan Palach Square.

Dramatic footage later emerged on social media showing some people jumping to safety from one of the building’s ledges several storeys up, and gunshots are also heard.

In a separate video, terrified crowds are seen fleeing the area popular with tourists.

At a briefing on Thursday evening, the country’s police chief and the interior minister said the gunman had been a student at the faculty.

They said he was from a village 21km (13 miles) outside Prague. The suspect’s father had been found dead earlier on Thursday. The



Police have urged any witnesses with photo or video footage of what happened to send it in.

gunman’s motives were not immediately known.

Preliminary information suggested that no police officers were injured in the attack, the authorities said.

The police said they were also working on the theory that the gunman may have been responsible for the deaths of two people last week in a forest near Prague.

Sergei Medvedev, a professor at the university, told the BBC he had been in one of the university’s auditoriums when the shootings began.

“I was giving a lecture at the moment and at first didn’t quite realise what happened because there were some sounds. The students... heard it better because I was so much concentrated on my talking, on my lecture,” he said.

“Then... we understood

that something big is happening. There was nothing online yet, nothing in the Czech press and the [news] networks. Then at some point, the special operation groups went storming in, they searched the room briefly and then went out... they told us to stay inside.

“One hour later, another police squad broke in and then put us on the floor, briefly searched us then evacuated from the building.”

US tourist Hannah Mallicoat told the BBC that she and her family had been on Jan Palach Square during the attack.

“A crowd of people were crossing the street when the first shot hit. I thought it was something like a firecracker or a car backfire until I heard the second shot and people started running,” she said.

“I saw a bullet hit the ground on the other side of the square about 30 ft (9m) away before ducking into a store. The whole area was blocked off and dozens of police cars and ambulances were going towards the university.”

Britain’s Joe Hyland, 18, told the BBC he had heard four gunshots.

“Everyone was sprinting and running for cover. I have a bad knee, am on a crutch. So I hobbled as quickly as possible,” added Mr Hyland, who was on his first holiday with friends. “We got to the metro and went down there because we thought it would be safest.”

Charles University students said they had barricaded themselves in classrooms.

“Currently stuck inside
cont’d on pg 17

Rudy Giuliani files for bankruptcy after \$148m defamation verdict

By Bernd Debusmann Jr

Rudy Giuliani, a long-time associate of former President Donald Trump, has filed for bankruptcy just days after he was ordered to pay \$148m (£116m) in a defamation case.

He was ordered to pay the sum after a judge found he defamed two Georgia election workers over false claims they tampered with votes in 2020.

The filing shows he owes millions of dollars in legal fees and unpaid taxes.

A spokesman said the move should “be a surprise to no-one”.

In a statement, the spokesman for Mr Giuliani, Ted Goodman, said “no person could have reasonably believed that [Mr Giuliani] would be able to pay such a high punitive amount”.

He added that Thursday’s bankruptcy filing in New York would give Mr Giuliani the “opportunity and time to pursue an appeal, while providing transparency for his finances under the supervision of the bankruptcy court”.

Mr Giuliani, 79, said



Rudy Giuliani has said he is having financial difficulties because of increasing legal fees and expenses.

earlier this year that he was having financial difficulties because of his increasing legal fees and expenses.

Last week, an eight-person jury ordered him to pay \$20m to Georgia poll workers Ruby Freeman and her daughter Wandrea «Shaye» Moss.

The pair said Mr Giuliani’s false claim that they tampered with votes had a traumatising impact on their lives. Ms Freeman said she would “always have to be careful” because of lingering fears she might be recognised

publicly.

Ms Freedom and Ms Moss were also awarded more than \$16m each for emotional distress. Another payment of \$75m in punitive damages was ordered to be split between them.

Addressing reporters outside the court after he was ordered to pay the sum, Mr Giuliani said: “I don’t regret a damn thing.”

On Wednesday, a judge ordered him to start paying the two women immediately and expressed concern he might not comply with the

judgement.

It is unclear how the bankruptcy declaration will impact on the payments, but US bankruptcy law does not allow the dissolution of debts stemming from “wilful and malicious injury” inflicted on another party.

The bankruptcy filing lists nearly 20 creditors, including Ms Freeman, Ms Moss and Hunter Biden who sued him in September.

Other creditors include the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which he owes more than \$700,000 in income tax, and two voting software companies that sued him over his false claims of election fraud.

A law firm that previously represented Mr Giuliani, Davidoff Hutcher & Citron LLP, is also included. The firm sued Mr Giuliani for \$1.4m in unpaid legal fees in September.

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my classroom in Prague,” Jakob Weizman, a student at Charles University, wrote on X (formerly Twitter) as it unfolded.

“Locked the door before the shooter tried to open it.”

An email to staff at the faculty of arts, seen by Reuters news agency, warned staff of the shooting.

It read: “Stay put, don’t go anywhere,

if you’re in the offices, lock them and place furniture in front of the door, turn off the lights.”

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said she was “shocked by the senseless violence”.

Founded in 1347, Charles University is the oldest and largest university in the Czech Republic, and one of the oldest such institutions in Europe.

Sports News



Freemans Village extend unbeaten run to go top of Second Division

Freemans Village extended their unbeaten run by winning their fourth game in as many matches to move to the top of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division on Wednesday.

Kahlique Kellman and Roy Gregory each scored twice as Freemans Village hammered Earthquakes 6-1 at the Freemans Village playing field.

Kellman scored in

the 3rd and 27th minutes, Gregory had conversions in the 26th and 60th minutes, Darius Hector scored in the 10th minute, and Malik Charles had a 50th-minute conversion for Freemans Village to advance to 12 points at the top of the Second Division.

Freemans Village finished the match with 10 players after Ranique James received a red card in the 73rd minute for using offensive, insulting,

and abusive language to the referee.

Joumol Semper scored the lone goal for the Earthquakes by converting a penalty kick in the 67th minute. It was the second loss in four games for the Earthquakes, who remain on six points by virtue of winning their other two matches.

O'Shale Simon struck a hat-trick and Chunsae Martin scored twice as Bethesda/Christian Hill

claimed their second win in four matches with a 6-0 drubbing of Celtics at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

The Celtics finished the match with nine players after Kevin Luke and Danny Potter received red cards. Luke was dismissed in the 71st minute for using offensive, insulting, and abusive language to the referee, while Potter was sent off in the 73rd minute for serious foul play.

The result carries Bethesda/Christian Hill to seven points, while the Celtics remain on three points after suffering their third loss in four matches.

Real Blizzard and CPT-SA Wings battled to a 3-3 draw at the New Winthropes playing field. Tahari James had conversions in the 27th and 29th minutes, and Kestone Daley scored in the 67th minute for Real Blizzard.

Reyon Henry had conversions in the 65th and 68th minutes, and Peter Jacobs scored in the 26th minute for the Wings. Both teams advanced to four points after three matches.

The other Second Division match scheduled for Wednesday between TAMO FC and FC Master Ballerz was not played due to an unmarked Golden Grove playing field.

EPILUS **KEVIN**

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Matthew defends Antigua government's support for sports

The Minister of Sports, Daryll Matthew, has stridently defended his and his government's support for sports in Antigua and Barbuda during his presentation to the 2024 Budget Debate in the Lower House of Parliament on Tuesday.

Matthew, who is also the Minister of Education and Creative Industries, said, contrary to many detractors, the government of Antigua and Barbuda continues to support sporting organizations with financial support via its Athletes Development Assistance Review Panel (ADARP) programme throughout the year.

The minister said the Ministry of Sports surpassed the EC\$500,000 it had budgeted for 2023 by disbursing EC\$867,062.11¢ in financial support to sporting organizations via its ADARP programme this year.

"I am going to speak about sports, and there are some persons in this country who waxed eloquently about nothing happening in sports, and sports are dead, and the minister is the worst minister of sports ever, and Antigua can't get anywhere in sports," Matthew stated.

"Mr. Speaker, when people speak about support for sports, I want to read the facts. And we have a committee called ADARP. The

chairman is Aldo McCoy, and I asked him to send me a report on the spending that we had in 2023.

"I will call out the national associations, and I will indicate how much is approved for that association. Let's not forget, sir, the budgeted amount for ADARP was EC\$500,000 for 2023."

According to Matthew, the disbursements are as follows: the Antigua and Barbuda Little League Baseball EC\$10,000; the Antigua Masters Cricket Club EC\$6,500; the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Bodybuilding and Weightlifting Federation EC\$22,166.10¢; and the Antigua and Barbuda Athletic Association EC\$96,210.

The Uprising Boxing Gym EC\$10,520; the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association EC\$73,000; the Antigua and Barbuda Swimming Association EC\$113,268.49¢; the Antigua and Barbuda Triathlon Association EC\$25,091; and the Antigua and Barbuda National Domino Association EC\$30,000.

The Antigua and Barbuda Golf Association EC\$9,500; the Antigua and Barbuda Junior Golfers EC\$26,959.52¢; the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation EC\$15,000; the Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association



Minister of Sports Honourable Daryll Matthew

EC\$15,000; and the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association EC\$10,000.

The schools' volleyball team that traveled to St. Maarten got EC\$31,831, and the Antigua and Barbuda Contract Bridge Association received EC\$5,000 for hosting an OECS tournament in Antigua this year.

But Minister Matthew disclosed that the largest single disbursement of EC\$363,245.72¢ was given to the Under-19 Schools' cricket team's that embarked on a tour to the United Kingdom during the summer.

Matthew added, "The

Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Exchange Programme, which is a programme we have with some clubs and schools in the United Kingdom where we send about five or six youngsters to England for about four months just playing cricket, costs EC\$4,320.

"I believe that was just to cover airfare because Ambassador Karen-Mae Hill, our High Commissioner to the UK, and her office in London did a lot of the facilitation for that programme."

A total of EC\$750,000 has been budgeted for disbursement by ADARP in 2024.



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EUROPEAN SUPER LEAGUE

European Super League back in spotlight after landmark ruling

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - UEFA and FIFA contravened EU law by stopping the formation of a Super League, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) said on Thursday, but though breakaway organizers welcomed the ruling, major leagues and clubs moved quickly to support the status quo.

The decision stirred up the arguments that swirled around the original Super League plan in 2021 as the ECJ has ruled against the principle of the governing bodies restricting a new league, but crucially added that the judgment did not necessarily mean such a league must be approved.

The 12 leading European clubs that proposed forming the breakaway league (ESL), which sparked widespread protests among fans, had been threatened with sanctions by UEFA if they went ahead with the plan, leading to nine of them pulling out.

Sports development company A22, formed to assist with creating the ESL, had claimed UEFA and

global governing body FIFA held a monopoly position which was in breach of the EU's Competition and Free Movement Law.

Soon after the verdict A22 released plans for a new competition that would feature 64 men's teams and 32 women's teams competing in a midweek league, threatening UEFA's flagship Champions League tournament.

In its ruling, the EU's top court said that FIFA and UEFA abused their dominant position by forbidding clubs to compete in a European Super League, although that project may still not be approved as the court did not rule on it specifically.

UEFA, FIFA, Football Supporters Europe, LaLiga, the European Club Association, European Leagues and FIFPro Europe said in a joint statement, "There is no place for any type of 'super league' in Europe. Sporting merit is what counts."

UEFA has organized pan-Europe-

an competitions for nearly 70 years and sees the ESL project as a significant threat to the lucrative Champions League, for which teams qualify on merit.

Real Madrid, Barcelona, Juventus and nine other top clubs announced the breakaway plan in April, 2021.

But the move collapsed within 48 hours after an outcry from fans, governments, and players forced Manchester United, Liverpool, Manchester City, Chelsea, Tottenham Hotspur, Arsenal, AC Milan, Inter Milan, and Atletico Madrid to pull out.

A22 CEO Bernd Reichart said in an interview with Reuters that the new competition would win over fans by providing a tournament that was more competitive and by making it free to view on television.

Shares in Juventus, listed on the Italian Stock Exchange, rose more than 10 percent on prospects for a revived ESL, with trading having to be halted because of excessive volatility.

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- Before eating or handling food
- After using the bathroom
- After touching pets or animals
- After handling rubbish

2

CATCH YOUR COUGH OR SNEEZE IN A CLEAN TISSUE, AND TOSS IN THE BIN

- Then wash your hands or use hand sanitizer

3

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- Germs spread this way



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ABSF concludes 2023 calendar with open water contest

President Edith Clashing said the Antigua and Barbuda Swimming Federation (ABSF) wrapped up its 2023 calendar of events with an open-water championship earlier this month.

Clashing, who was elected to lead the ABSF for a new four-year term in March, said the Open Water Swimming Championship that took place at Dickenson Bay was a successful event to wrap up the 2023 season.

“This month we have basically ended our calendar of events by holding an Open Water Swimming Championship at Dickenson Bay. I was determined that it would take place, and I must say that it went off quite well,” Clashing said.

“It was held without the large numbers as we normally would have had because he had about 18 swimmers heading off island to a pool championship in Trinidad a week or so after, and their coaches didn’t want them to



Swimmer Reuben Edwards (ABSF)

do the open water swim.

“So we were down to 40 swimmers when we would have had about 60 swimmers had they participated. But it went very well, and we ran three races.

“We did a 3K, a 1K and a 500 meter for the novice swimmers to give them a chance to stretch their limbs to see if they could manage

the distance.”

Reuben Edwards of Vipers was the overall champion for the 3K race in the male division. Edwards, who contested the Boys 11 to 12 category, won the race in a time of 44 minutes and 31.22 seconds.

Ania Lewis of Storm was the overall champion for the 3K race in the fe-

male division. Lewis, who contested the Girls 18 to 24 category, won the race in 50 minutes and 10.91 seconds.

Alaysia Liddie of Wadadli Aquatic Racers (WAR) was the overall champion in the 1K race in the female division. Liddie, who contested the Girls 11 to 12 category, won the race by clocking 19 minutes and 55.65 seconds.

James Tranter of Vipers was the overall champion in the 1K race in the male division. Tranter, who contested the Boys 11 to 12 category, won the race in a time of 17 minutes and 15.79 seconds.

Clashing said 20 swimmers, who represented Antigua and Barbuda at a recent meet in Trinidad, performed quite well.

“Those 18 swimmers that would have gone off to overseas invitationals, I can tell you, the Antigua and Barbuda swimmers held their own and they did quite well,” Clashing said.

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had a very strong red-ball program being run over the past year, which has unearthed significant talent throughout the region.

“The selected players have passed each test given to them and must now be given the opportunity to showcase their skills in the Test arena. Australia away is always a challenge, but we are confident in our team.”

The two teams will again compete for the Frank Worrell Trophy, named in honour of the legendary West Indies

all-rounder and captain. The first Test will be a red ball fixture at the Adelaide Oval from January 17 to 21, and the second, a pink ball Day/Night contest at the Gabba in Brisbane from January 25 to 29.

This is West Indies second Test series out of a total of six to play in the new 2023-2025 ICC WTC cycle. The Test Series against Australia will be the first of three away series that West Indies will play in the WTC. West Indies drew one Test match and lost one against India in August.

Following the Test series, West Indies will face Australia in three One-Day Internationals and three T20 Internationals, and these squads will be announced at a later date.

Full WI Test Squad: Kraigg Brathwaite (captain), Alzarri Joseph (vice-captain), Tagenarine Chanderpaul, Kirk McKenzie, Alick Athanaze, Kavem Hodge, Justin Greaves, Joshua DaSilva, Akeem Jordan, Gudakesh Motie, Kemar Roach, Kevin Sinclair, Tevin Imlach, Shamar Joseph, and Zachary McCaskie.

West Indies name Test squad for tour of Australia

Antiguan and Leeward Islands fast bowler Alzarri Joseph has been elevated as vice-captain of the senior West Indies Test team.

Joseph was named as deputy to Barbadian skipper Kraigg Brathwaite in a 15-member squad, which was announced by the Cricket West Indies (CWI) Senior Men's Selection Panel on Wednesday, to travel to Australia to play a two-Test series as part of the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) from January 17 to 29, 2024.

Joseph was also named as vice-captain of the West Indies team in the recent CG United One-Day International Series against England.

The 27-year-old was elevated to the position after leading the Leeward Islands Hurricanes to the final of last month's CG United Super50 Cup last, which was won by hosts Trinidad &



Australia's captain Pat Cummins, left, and West Indies skipper Kraigg Brathwaite hold the Frank Worrell Trophy. (CWI Media) Tobago Red Force.

The West Indies squad will arrive in Australia on December 30 and will hold a preparation camp from January 2 to 9 in Adelaide, followed by a Four

(4) Day First Class warm-up match against a Cricket Australia XI at the Karen Rolton Oval (KRO) in Adelaide from January 10 to 13 January.

The selectors have named several uncapped players in the squad. These are batter Zachary McCaskie, wicket-keeper Tevin Imlach; all-rounders Justin Greaves, Kavem Hodge and Kevin Sinclair; as well as fast bowlers Akeem Jordan and Shamar Joseph.

Jayden Seales is unavailable for selection due to a shoulder injury. Jason Holder and Kyle Mayers are unavailable as they have expressed a preference to explore T20 franchise opportunities in January.

Speaking about the make-up of the squad, CWI Lead Selector, Dr. Desmond Haynes said, "The squad has been affected by the unavailability of some key players. However, we have

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West Indies fast bowler Alzarri Joseph